

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

December 17, 2024

Stacy DiCola  
Associate Director of Public Information  
Rhode Island Department of State  
State House  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Ms. DiCola:

Please find attached to this correspondence a complaint against Michael Magee for failing to register as a lobbyist on behalf of Chiefs for Change during calendar year 2021. Common Cause Rhode Island requests that your office initiate an investigation pursuant to the authority granted to your office under the Rhode Island Lobbying Reform Act, and seek applicable relief from the court, including but not limited to monetary civil penalties for violations of the Act.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

John Marion  
Executive Director

Attachment

CC: LeeAnn Byrne, Chief of Staff

## Attachment

Michael Magee (herein “Magee”) was the Chief Executive Officer of Chiefs for Change (herein “CFC”) from 2015 to 2022.<sup>1</sup> CFC is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization located at 1455 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 400-311, Washington, DC 20004.

On October 29, 2024, Rhode Island Attorney General Peter Neronha released the results of investigations conducted by his office and the Rhode Island State Police into the awarding of a contract to the ILO Group, LLC. In the documents released by the Attorney General, Michael Magee clearly and repeatedly engaged in lobbying, as defined in § 42-139.1-3(a)(3). A non-exhaustive list of examples of Magee’s lobbying include:

- (a) Michael Magee’s role in a “Zoom” call on March 5, 2021, along with Governor McKee, McKee’s Chief of Staff Anthony Silva, the Director of the Department of Administration James Thorsen, and the state Purchasing Agent Nancy McIntyre, on which Magee “introduced the idea of hiring ILO as a consulting firm.”<sup>2</sup>
- (b) The State Police report that, “Following that meeting Magee sent an email to Thorsen and McIntyre in which he attempted to narrow the field of those firms able to bid on the contract by including terms favorable to ILO.”<sup>3</sup>
- (c) The State Police conclusion that, “When read in the context of Magee’s prior communications to the Governor’s office, his *advocating* for one vendor to DOA officials suggests Magee’s continued intent to have [ILO Group CEO, Julia] Rafal-Baer receive the contract” (emphasis added).<sup>4</sup>

A search of the Lobby Tracker maintained by the Rhode Island Department of State (<https://lobbytracker.sos.ri.gov>) finds that, in 2021, no one by the name of “Michael Magee” registered as a lobbyist, and no organization by the name of “Chiefs for Change” registered as an entity employing a lobbyist. Therefore, we believe:

- (a) Michael Magee is in violation of the requirement in § 42-139.1-4 to register as a lobbyist within seven (7) calendar days of any lobbying engagement.

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<sup>1</sup> See RISP Investigation Binder\_0, page 2; accessed at [riag.ri.gov/ilo](http://riag.ri.gov/ilo) on December 17, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, at 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, at 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, at 9.

